

HEART DISEASE CURABLE NO. 1604

**A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JUNE 19, 1881,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

"He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted."
Isaiah 61:1.

THIS text receives great luster from the fact that it was one of the passages which the Savior read when He entered into the synagogue at Nazareth and preached on the Sabbath. It is as fresh as ever and we may still say of it, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." It is no small privilege that we poor under-shepherds should be permitted to take the same text as "that great Shepherd of the sheep." Our care must be to point to Him in it. I intended to have preached from these words in Luke 4:18, but when I looked at the Revised Version and found that the words were not there at all I was somewhat startled. I began to ask whether the omission was a correct one or not, and without making pretense to scholarship, I feel convinced that the revisers are acting honestly in leaving it out. It was not in the original manuscript of Luke, but probably some pious person added it with the intention of making the quotation more complete. Whatever the intention may have been, and however natural the added words may appear, it is a pity that the unknown brother ventured to improve that which was perfect from the beginning. After resolving in my mind the fact, which I accept, that the passage was not written by Luke in his record, I have, I think, discovered the reason. When our Savior unrolled the Book of Isaiah, He read from it, but we are not certain that He read any one passage through. According to the Jewish law it was allowed in the prophets for the reader in the synagogue to skip, as we call it, to make selections and read here a passage and there a passage, as he aimed at bringing out his subject. As the words are given in our Authorized Version you will notice that the portion of Scripture is not exactly like the prophetic words in Isaiah 61, and that one sentence, at least, must have been taken from another part of the Prophetic Book.

The Savior did read from Isaiah 61, but He also quoted other portions of Isaiah, probably taking a verse here, and a verse there, and blending them in one, just as sometimes, when I wish to give you a connected narrative, I read on in a chapter, say to verse eight, and then miss a piece to verse 16 and again run on to verse 24 and miss a few verses again. The Savior gave a resume of texts which stood near each other upon the roll, and Luke records those upon which our Lord dwelt in His sermon. "But," you say, "why, then, if it is so, did He omit the words which describe Him as sent to bind up the broken-hearted?" It may possibly have been His intention to leave out all allusion to healing. They were all looking for Him to work miracles of healing that day, and therefore He either omitted the sentence for the moment, or else He did not dwell upon it, for I take it that Luke is not giving us exactly the Scripture, but the sense of it, and those points in the Scripture upon which the Savior enlarged. He probably gives us notes of those sentences which were both read and expounded and the Lord may have purposefully refused to expound even if He read the sentence before us—"He has sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted." I say they were looking to Him to work miracles of healing, and He did not mean to gratify them. We are told that, "He could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief." He did not intend to exhibit Himself as a mere wonderworker, and therefore but lightly touched upon the sentence about healing till further on, when He saw, as He read their hearts, that they noticed the omission, and He therefore said to them, "You will surely say, Physician, heal Yourself"—which, being paraphrased, may run thus—"You either did not read that passage, or else you lightly treated it, and yet a part of the Messiah's business is to heal the sick."

He perceived that by His own silence He had called their attention to the Scripture, and that they were ready to quote it against Him by the challenge, "Physician, heal Yourself. Do for Your own family and city what You are said to have done at Capernaum." Our Lord paid no attention to claims based up-

on His dwelling in the place, for He knows no claim but that of *mercy*. He intended to exercise His sovereignty and, therefore, He reminded them that healing was not sent to the lepers that were in Israel, but was sent only to Naaman who had nothing to do with Israel, but was one of that Syrian nation which opposed and oppressed Israel! Possibly He gave them nothing about healing that day because He knew that they were not brokenhearted. He who reads men's hearts knew that they were captives to their unbelief, blinded by prejudice, and fettered by sin, and therefore He said, "He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." But the tenderest part of the gospel being inapplicable to their case, He would not mention it in their hearing at that time. He would not cast it like a pearl before swine, but reserved it until they should lament their sin and adopt another mood. This, it strikes me, is the reason why the passage is not mentioned in the original gospel of Luke and, if so, the omission is most instructive. Take heed lest you, also, should miss the sweetest word of the gospel through being in an unfit state to receive it!

Concerning the fact of difference between the Revised and the Authorized Versions, I would say that no Baptist should ever fear any honest attempt to produce the correct text and an accurate interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. For many years Baptists have insisted upon it that we ought to have the Word of God translated in the best possible manner, whether it would confirm certain religious opinions and practices, or work against them. All we want is the exact mind of the Spirit as far as we can get it. Beyond all other Christians we are concerned in this, seeing we have no other sacred Book. We have no prayer book or binding creed, or authoritative minutes of conferences. We have nothing but the Bible, and we would have that as pure as ever we can get it. By the best and most honest scholarship that can be found, we desire that the common version may be purged of every blunder of transcribers, addition of human ignorance or human knowledge so that the Word of God may come to us as it came from His own hand. I confess that it looks a grievous thing to part with words which we thought were part and parcel of Luke, but as they are not in the oldest copies and must be given up, we will make capital out of their omission by seeing in that fact the wisdom of the great Preacher who did not speak upon cheering truths of God when they were not needed and might have overlaid His seasonable rebuke. Although we have not the sentence in Luke, we do have it in Isaiah, and that is quite enough for me.

Indeed, if it were not in Isaiah, it is yet in other parts of the Word of God. Its meaning pervades the Bible—it is the very genius and spirit of the Old and New Testaments that the Messiah is sent to heal the brokenhearted. The gospel comes that the miseries of men may be relieved, that the despair of the troubled may be cheered and that joy may glitter on all sides like the dew of the morning when the sun rises. I pray that the commission of Jesus Christ may be fulfilled this day to all the brokenhearted ones to whom the word of this message shall come. I hope there are none here who claim a *right* to healing, for, if so, the Lord will not listen to them. He will do as He wills with His own, for it is written, "He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy." The men of Nazareth claimed it in the synagogue that day because He had lived among them, and so Jesus did not speak of healing them. Jesus gives freely, but if any man demands anything of Him as his due, He is jealous for His crown rights and will pay no regard to such insulting demands! His healing work is not of debt, but of grace! It is not granted to presumptuous demands, but frankly bestowed as a free gift.

Now turn to the text. "He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted." Here are three matters for consideration—heart wounds, heavenly healing and an honored healer.

I. First, let us think upon HEART WOUNDS. Many in this world live with broken hearts. Bad is a broken limb of any kind—bruised and wounded flesh is hard enough to bear—but when the fracture is in the *heart*, it is a sad business. Of all cases of distress, these are the most pitiable and yet they are very frequently despised. When a man's spirit is cowed and his heart is crushed and he is despairing and utterly wretched, others get away from him, for he is dreary company. As the herd leaves the wounded stag to bleed and die alone, so do men instinctively avoid the society of those who are habitually gloomy. Their own desire after happiness leads men to escape from the miserable. Be joyful and you shall attract; be sorrowful and you will scatter. Job truly says, "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease." The careless, the giddy, the superficial look with horror upon those whose thoughtfulness rebukes them, while the prosperous and happy view them with

reluctance because they remind them of sorrows which otherwise they might forget. God has smitten some men and their hearts are sorely broken beneath His rod, and therefore their fellows hide their faces from them and despise them. Many blame them and say they ought to shake off their gloom and make an effort to be brave. I know not all they say, but certain it is that among the despised and rejected of men we find a company who carry with them heartbreaks day and night. What wonder, then, that they are frequently avoided—common humanity calls us to *help* those who are injured in limb, and if there is an accident in the street, a crowd will soon be gathered, and human kindness will exhibit itself.

But if there is breakage of the heart, sympathy is soon exhausted, and love, itself, grows weary of her hopeless efforts to console! Those who are taught of God will help the brokenhearted, but *human* sympathy is soon worn out because it is conscious of its inability to succor. You can set a limb, and the bones will grow—but what can we do in the resetting of a fractured heart? So, not liking to attempt the impossible, not caring to be continually baffled, it seems to be natural, even to good men, to be little anxious for the company of the desolate. Thus these unhappy ones are doomed to sigh out, “Lover and friend have You put far from me and my acquaintance into darkness.” I am afraid the story of Job is more often repeated than we think. When men come to comfort the forlorn, they often become embittered by their conscious failure, and begin to upbraid till the poor tortured creature cries out in agony, “Miserable comforters are you all!” Therefore is the case of the brokenhearted a very hard one because they are often despised and avoided.

Happy is it for them that the Lord Jesus was sent to heal the brokenhearted! Apart from this, it is exceedingly painful to have a broken heart. The heart is the center of sensation, and therefore, its being broken involves the acutest of pangs. Sorrow bangs over the spirit in clouds which cannot be dispelled. Not only is their cup filled with sadness, but they sit by wells of sorrow. They have long forgotten the palm trees of Elim and they are filled with the bitter waters of Marah. They rest not day nor night—how can they? No pain of the flesh can equal heaviness of heart! Give me all the aches and pains which my body can endure, but spare me heartache! Break me alive on the wheel, but let me not live to be brokenhearted unless it is from the grand cause of penitence. “A wounded spirit who can bear?” When the arrows penetrate the soul, then the lifeblood becomes as liquid fire and the man is a mass of misery. Besides, it weakens us, for when the heart is wounded the source of strength is impaired. A man who has a strong heart can do anything! However weak, feeble, crippled, or diseased he may be in body, yet if he keeps up his spirits, he can laugh at all his pains. But if the heart is crushed, what can he do? What can he hope? What can he endure? When fear is in the heart, the grasshopper becomes a burden, they that look out of the windows are darkened and the keepers of the house tremble. Far worse than the infirmities of old age are the miseries of a broken heart!

Ordinarily a broken heart is utterly incurable. How many times have I had to learn this lesson to my own deep humiliation! It has been my happy, happy lot to speak to brokenhearted ones, and see them gradually rise to be of good cheer when my Lord has spoken through me. But apart from His presence, I have argued, pleaded, explained and persuaded—and all in vain! I have been almost dragged down into the wretchedness from which I hoped to rescue my fellow man, for the sympathy I have felt for the desponding has well-near made me despondent, myself!

What a variety of advice physicians give and what is the good of it all? “Take a journey,” they say, “into foreign lands. See new cities, or amuse yourself among the Alps.” Yes, but if the man carries with him a heart weary of life, he is apt enough to bring it back with him—and what good has he gained? “Attend the baths. Resort to the best physicians. Use electricity. Try strong exercise.” This is all very well, for the body may need strengthening or purifying or awakening or resting, but if the secret of the disease is a broken heart and the hammer of God has smitten it—all the physicians in the world can be of no service—it shall end as with her of old who spent all her livelihood upon physicians and was no better, but rather grew worse. There *is* a cure for this grievous malady of which we shall speak full soon, but there is none in Gilead, or in the whole of nature’s fields. Earthly pleasures and precepts are physicians of no value. Their ointments and their liniments, their outward oils and inward medicines are all of no use to reach the core of our being and restore the heart. Magicians may charm ever so wisely, but they cannot charm the hemlock from the furrows of the soul. When the heart is broken, who can rivet the shattered fragment? If there had been a remedy anywhere else, the Lord Jesus would not have left

heaven to heal! But inasmuch as He came on this errand, depend upon it—*nobody* else could have performed it.

This heartbreak in the end will be fatal if it is not healed. We are frequently reading of men who suddenly fall dead and the death certificate states that they died of disease of the heart. That is a way which physicians have of saying that they do not know what ailed the deceased. The heart is very much like Africa, a region unexplored. Mentally and spiritually it is so and when the heart is broken, true life is well-near gone. Existence ceases to be desirable when the spirits fail. Such morbid minds say with Job, “My soul chooses strangling rather than life.” God grant that none may be as wicked and foolish as to end their own lives and thus leap into the fire to escape the heat. Doubtless many have gone down to the grave, melted away in tears, dissolved in woe. Unhappy those who live refusing to be comforted and die rejecting the one good and great Physician who could heal them! May none of you be of that unhappy company! It is a sad story, this tale of the brokenhearted one, but in many a house it is well known. I invite you, beloved, if you do not know the disease, to pray that you never may! And if you have any friends afflicted with it, be very tender and gentle with them. I remember the impression made upon my young heart, as a child, when I was taken to a house where there was a sad lady, always dressed in black, who said that she had committed the unpardonable sin. I remember the horror that I felt as I sat in the room with her and wanted, from very fear, to get away, thinking she must be a dreadfully wicked woman. Yet she may have been one of the most gracious of Christians, and it is probable that she came out into the light of God, again, before she departed this life. These crushed ones are often the best of people. The fairest of our lilies are often broken at the stalk. Our ripest fruit is visited by the worm. Thank God they shall yet have beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning! Sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

II. We will now, for a little while, speak upon the HEAVENLY HEALING. The Lord Jesus Christ has come into the world to bind up the brokenhearted and surely it means *all* the brokenhearted. I do not think we have any right to restrict texts of Scripture, as we very often do, to square them to our theological systems. In this case you will hear the passage interpreted to mean the *spiritually* brokenhearted and then people look within to see whether their pains are spiritual and thus they are kept from going to Christ. I do not mind revised versions, provided they really get at the original, but I do not mean to let you revise the version by putting in such qualifying words as you may think fit.

What a host of revised versions we have! Everybody has one of his own. Certain texts which will not fit into our system must be planed and cut down. Have you ever seen the hard work that some brethren have to shape a Scripture to their mind? One text is not Calvinistic, it looks rather Arminian—of course it cannot be so, and therefore they twist and tug to get it right. As for our Arminian brethren, it is wonderful to see how they hammer away at the 9th chapter of Romans—steam-hammers and screw-jacks are nothing to their appliances for getting rid of *election* from that chapter! We have all been guilty of racking Scripture, more or less, and it will be well to have done with the evil forever! We had far better be inconsistent with ourselves than with the inspired Word of God.

I have been called an Arminian Calvinist or a Calvinistic Arminian and I am quite content so long as I can keep close to my Bible. I desire to preach what I find in this Book whether I find it in anybody else's book or not. And as I do not find “spiritual brokenhearted” in my text, I shall take the liberty of giving a wide range to this brokenheartedness. Many are brokenhearted from a sense of guilt. This is the best form of brokenheartedness in the world! When the hammer of God's law comes down with its 10 strokes and every commandment pounds the heart to powder, it is well. When a man once hears the law of God proclaimed from burning Sinai with a voice of thunder, he ceases to trifle and is sorely afraid. He learns that God is angry with the wicked every day—“if he turns not He will whet His sword, He has bent His bow and made it ready” His heart fails him as he hears this terrible declaration. Then is a man in bitterness as one that mourns for his only son, even for his first-born. Oh, that I should ever have lived to make my God my enemy; that ever I should have been so base, so ungrateful to my best friend! Oh, cursed heart, to have loved its idols and have hated the Most High! Some of us knew, in the days of our conviction, what it was to hate the light of day and to dread the darkness of night—to long for our bed that we might sleep—and yet to toss there restlessly upon a pillow harder than Jacob's stone. O sin! Sin!

Sin! If its weight is once felt; if the terrors of God once break loose upon an awakened conscience, the misery reaches to agony, and the agony nears to death!

But, beloved, our Lord Jesus has come to heal the anguish of the conscience by declaring that there is forgiveness with God that He may be feared, and He can be just and yet the Justifier of sinners who believe. Thus is it written, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleans us from all sin." "He that believes in Him is not condemned." Whenever the Lord Jesus is believably received, the heartbreak of remorse is ended, and the sinner rests at the foot of the cross. When the Holy Spirit applies the blood of atonement, the blood of the heart's wound ceases to flow. The griefs of Jesus end our grief—His death is the death of our despair! Substitution is the charming word which opens the gate of hope! This form of heartbreak, if it is present here this morning, is my Lord's own specialty. In dealing with this He is altogether at home, for He delights in mercy! I have seen Him apply the liniments to the wounds with tender, downy-fingered hands, swathing the limb with hands so soft and yet so strong that the gash has closed, never to open again! So speedy and so sure is His surgery that the broken heart has begun to sing as soon as He has touched it! Do it again, great Master! Do it at this very hour! Say, poor sinner, "Lord, do it to me." He can heal when all others have failed. He can heal you *now!*—

*"When wounded sore, the stricken soul
Lies bleeding and unbound,
One only hand, a pierced hand,
Can save the sinner's wound."*

Another brokenness of heart is felt by those who regard themselves as outcasts. Few of you have ever felt that dreadful weight upon the soul. It is as a dreadful millstone about the neck. The woman whose sin may not be in God's sight more gross than that of others is yet regarded by society as utterly fallen and defiled—a thing to be flung from hand to hand and cast on the dunghill as a faded flower! Words cannot describe the shudder which passes over the mind of one betrayed and deceived when she perceives that she is, from now on, numbered with castaways. A like thing happens to the man who has been guilty of embezzlement, or some other form of dishonesty. He is found out, prosecuted by his employer, set before the court and sent to prison to be, from then on, a branded criminal. Ah me, how dreadful must be the waking up on the first morning in a prison cell! He who was once courted will, from now on, be shunned—he is a broken man without a character—marked by all as an outcast.

Ah, poor man, poor woman, Jesus receives sinners such as you! Some of us have known what it is to feel as if we were shut out from hope and from the mercy of God. We thought that He would not hear our cries. It was of no use for us to pray, so our fears told us—God could not have mercy upon such gross transgressors—He must leave us to ourselves and to our sins. We thought that He had set us up to be the targets of His arrows and to stand, like Pharaoh, the monuments of His wrath against the proud! Yet were our fears all false, for our Lord Jesus, who came to bind up the brokenhearted, has bound up all our wounds and we are happy in Him.

Fallen ones, He will restore you and give you rest! It is the glory of the Christian Church that it receives into its brotherhood the fallen and the outcasts as soon as they repent. The world offers no room for repentance, but in the church, all are penitents! When Jesus forms the center of a church, there will be a ring of sinners attracted. Do we not read, "Then drew near unto Him, all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him"? Never did He drive them back, but He welcomed them—"This Man receives sinners and eats with them." Listen poor crushed one! However low you may have fallen, come to Jesus, for He will not cast you out! Come to His true servants, for it will be their joy to restore you. When the gates of respectability are shut, the gates of mercy and Christian love are still open! Return, O wanderer! A welcome awaits you! Jesus will make you whiter than snow. Though you may well believe that He asks Himself concerning you, "How shall I put *you* among the children?" yet He will do it, for He lifts the beggar from the dunghill—

*"That Christ will receive Him no sinner need fear,
The poorer the wretch, the welcomer here!
Though you may be outcast and banished afar,
Your welcome is certain, come just as you are."*

Another brokenness of heart is that of utter helplessness in which a man feels that he is too feeble to fight the battle of life. He is not only given up by others, but he has given up on himself. He floats like a

deserted vessel, derelict, water-logged, abandoned. Sin has beset him. He has given way to temptations and now Satan binds him fast. Perhaps he has backslidden from the profession of religion and brought great dishonor upon the name of Christ and now he cries, "My last end will be worse than the first! I have crucified the Lord afresh and shall die in my sins! I neglected the means of grace, I became slack in prayer, I turned my face away from God and now He has left me and I cannot get back again." Alas, for men who are bound with such fetters, the iron enters into their souls! There are some here who once ran well—what hindered them that they should not obey the truth of God? They have gradually slipped back, back, back, till now it is a question with them whether they ever knew the grace of God in truth at all. They are grieved to have it so and long to be restored—but despair holds them. My gracious Lord Jesus Christ comes to you, backsliders, who are filled with your own ways, who labor and are heavy laden with the fear that you are cast away forever, and He says, "Return, you backsliding children."

He will help you to return. He will draw you and you shall run to Him. The love of Jesus has not changed! He loves even to the end. He will not cast away a soul that looks to Him. O taste and see that the Lord is good! Return to Him this morning. He will receive you graciously and love you freely—and you shall render to Him, again, the calves of your lips as once you used to do, for Jesus heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds! Many are broken in heart because they are afflicted so heavily. When sickness first comes to our door and we are new to it, it is a very unwelcome guest. New pains are sharp, fresh griefs appear intolerable, for as yet the bullock is unaccustomed to the yoke. By-and-by we bear our woes more patiently, but at first, the man afflicted with a disease which he knows will bring him to his grave is sadly cast down. The man who sees business ebbing away and foresees bankruptcy and perhaps destitution, is crushed. Brother, if you receive Jesus Christ into your heart, He will ease you by teaching you a sweet submission to the divine will. He will tell you that "all things work together for good to them that love God." He will explain to you the doctrine of providence. He will make you to consider the end of the Lord, for He is very pitiful even in His sharpest dispensations and He will supply you with such strength of grace that you will be able to endure pain or poverty. Thus will He support you till your heart shall become strong and you shall bravely face the afflictions and conflicts of life.

Some are brokenhearted through bereavement. One laments, "I have lost my wife." Another bewails herself, "I have lost my husband." Or a third cries, "My mother is gone." Or a fourth, with moth-erly tenderness, mourns the dearest child that ever nestled in a woman's bosom. "Alas," cries each one, "I can never survive the stroke!" We have all endured sorrow, but bereavements are a sharp sword. Friends can do little to fill up the great gap which death has made. Ah, it is, indeed, an aching void which is left in an affectionate heart when the dear object of love is torn away. The best of people in this respect suffer most. Herein is comfort from Jesus! The blessed doctrine of the resurrection cheers the darkness of the sepulcher! Jesus says, "Your brother shall rise again." The blessed thought of the eternal felicity of those that we gladly would have detained below is a sweet recompense for their loss. We remember our Lord's prayer—"I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory." Sometimes, in prospect of losing our beloved ones, we pull very hard earthward and cry, "Father, I will that they be with *me* where I am." Did you ever feel a pull the other way and start, and look to see who pulls heavenward? You watch and see that it is Jesus praying, "Fa-ther, I will that they be with Me where I am." Whenever Christ and you come to cross purposes I know you will yield, for you will gladly acknowledge that the dear ones are more Christ's than yours! Let them go. Jesus, we can part with all for You! It is no parting, when we know that our beloved is with You! Thus does Jesus, who Himself wept for Lazarus, heal broken hearts whose joy is buried with those they loved so well.

There are many other forms of this disease. I have known hearts to be thoroughly broken by deser-tion. One whom you loved and trusted proves false and the early love of a true heart is broken like a pot-ter's vessel. What desolation fills many a soul that once was happy as the birds—for treachery wastes like the scourge of war! When a choice friend betrays you, or a professed brother in Christian work, who ought to have held up your hands, weakens and opposes you, it is a blow upon the heart as when a bone is broken by the hammer. Yet there is consolation, for He who had His Judas and bitterly cried, "He that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me," knows how to bind up such a broken heart, for He becomes a friend that sticks closer than a brother and He makes us feel, in the sweet tenderness and

faithfulness of His divine companionship, that we are not alone, for the Lord is with us. He is better unto us than 10 friends! So long as He smiles, sunshine is on our way! Ahithophel may join our enemies and Judas may sell us for silver, but we are secure, for He will make the wrath of man to praise Him and neutralize its gall by the sweetness of His company. I am certain that there is no form of broken heart present but what there is medicine for it in the Word of God and in Jesus who is the Word of God. The leaves of this tree are for the healing of nations. Christ Jesus brings a cure-all for those who are otherwise incurable. In His dispensary there are remedies compounded by divine art which will touch the heart and act upon it like a charm till it shall throb with pleasure as much as it now palpitates with anguish.

This is no quackery. His is a scientific system of surgery which has borne the test of ages and has been proven by the experience of countless sufferers to be infallible. Here we stand, ourselves, living witnesses of His skill! He has bound us up and we are now saved from heartache and made to praise Him with our whole heart!

III. Our third theme is THE HONORED PHYSICIAN and this is the central point of the text. Jesus says, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted." Observe, first, that this honored Physician gives *personal* attention to the brokenhearted. He says, "He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted." Daniel said, "My God has sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths," but as for you brokenhearted ones, you receive *personal* attention from your Lord! The Lord has sent Jesus Christ Himself because the task needs a divine hand. The Lord's servants, without their Lord, can do no more than the staff of Elisha did when Gehazi laid upon the dead child and there was neither voice nor hearing. The great Prophet Himself is coming and wonders will be seen among us! He is here at this moment in His own proper person and He will not fail in any case that is brought to Him. Many a great physician has so much practice that he is compelled to take a partner or an assistant, but my Lord is able to do all His work and none can interfere in it. Jesus Himself, personally, with His own pierced hands, continues to bind up the brokenhearted! Does not this fact tend to already comfort you? If Jesus undertakes to lift you up, it will be done! He is the consolation of Israel, appointed to comfort all that mourn.

Come, old Simeon, take Him up in your arms and forget the infirmities of age! Come, widowed Anna, and give thanks to God for Him who is the Husband of the lonely heart! He will, Himself, wipe all tears from the eyes of His people and He will do it now! O you who in your youth are bearing the yoke of grief and declare that your life is blighted, say so no more—for Jesus comes to help you, even He, Himself! Remember the record, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord"—the same sight shall gladden you! This Physician is fully qualified. He is called Christos, or Christ, which signifies anointed—"The Lord has anointed Me." I am sure that Jesus can cure broken hearts because God has given Him the Spirit, even the Comforter, to rest upon Him without measure that His words may drop with the oil of comfort. O, trust Him now! He has all the fitness for His work that God can give Him. He is complete and we are complete in Him. A broken heart needs oil to be poured into its wounds and, "Christ," is an oily name—He is christened a Savior, anointed a healer! The Good Samaritan poured in oil and wine, but here is heavenly oil in the hands of one who is, Himself, the health of our countenance.

As if this were not enough, notice that our Lord is commissioned. "He has *sent* Me," He says. First, "anointed Me," then, "sent Me." Our Lord said to the blind man, "Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam, which is, being interpreted, 'sent.'" How I wish that you who are brokenhearted would go and wash in this pool and find comfort in the blessed fact that the Anointed is sent of God to you! The Great Father thought so much of you that He sent a special Messenger to heal you! Yes, sent the best one there was in heaven to be a Missionary to you! No other was fit to be second to Him, but God emptied heaven of its superlative glory and sent His own Son down below that He might bind up broken hearts—I cannot imagine a failure of this Messiah—the Sent One. This is the Shiloh for whose salvation Jacob waited, looking for Him who should be sent. This is the Apostle, or Sent One of our profession, sent on purpose that He might comfort all the heirs of sorrow. Jesus is carrying on a mission, a mission for the desolate! He is a Missionary to the forlorn, commissioned to commiserate, appointed to relieve. Observe, then, His qualifications and His commission. He bears a diploma of the highest value! He is the Royal Physician—Surgeon in Ordinary to all bleeding hearts! O that you would put your mournful cases into His

hands! Remember, also, what He is in person and character and I think you will at once say, "I will submit my broken heart to Him that He may heal me." For Jesus, your Physician, is one who knows heartbreak by having felt it. He said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death." I will tell you one of the most terrible tormentors in the world, excelling even an inquisitor—it is an unfeeling comforter. Save me from a man who comes to console me wearing a face of marble and a heart of stone! His words put grit into your wounds, or what if I say—salt? Job knew this dreadful affliction.

Look, then, at the reverse of the picture—the surest comforter is one who is touched with a feeling of our infirmity, seeing He was tempted in all points like as we are. "No," says the broken heart, "Christ never knew *my* pain." Ah, but He did! What is it? That you have been slandered? Jesus cries, "Reproach has broken My heart!" Is it that you are forsaken by friends? Is it not written, "Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled"? Is it that you are forsaken by *God*? Did not Jesus cry, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me"? Is it that your cup is bitter? Did He not pray three times that the cup might pass from Him and still the cup was not removed? He leads you through no darker rooms than He went through before—and in all He is so tenderly sympathetic with you that He is the best Physician you can desire. Besides, how gentle He is, as a mother with her child! He is meek and lowly in heart, considerate, tender—there was never one like He! He has soft fingers for sore places, sweet liniment for sharp cuts and precious balm for bleeding wounds. The oil with which He was anointed has both perfume and soothing about it. It is so sweet that those who are far away may perceive it and it is so rare a salve that it works its way and touches wounds which nothing else could reach. Jesus has great skill in bringing light into the dreary recesses of darkened minds. Oh that you knew my Master! If you had seen Him as my broken heart saw Him on my first spiritual birthday, when I heard the word that says, "Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth"—I say, if you had seen Him as I then saw Him you would have rushed to His feet for healing!

I was at the ends of the earth! I thought I was ready to slip over the edge, altogether, and sink into the abyss! But in obedience to His command, I *looked*. It was the dim look of a half-blinded eye. I looked through my tears, but hardly hoped to see Him. Still I looked. I turned my eyes that way and I resolved that if I were lost it should be lying at Jesus' feet. I believed He was able to save me and I left myself with Him—and He has done great things for me, to which I cheerfully bear witness! He keeps on blessing me and He will complete His work before long. I know whom I have believed and I rest in Him! O dear hearts that are breaking, I wish you would do as I did! I would to God the same grace would lead you, at once, to fall at my Lord's feet! Swoon away into Christ's arms! Do not try to get stronger—be weaker, if weaker you can be! Be *nothing* and let Him be your all! Die into His life!

Come, brokenhearted ones, do not try to bind *yourselves* up—you will only wound yourselves the more! Do not look for comfort into the black and horrible abyss of your own nature, but look to Him whom God has sent! Get right away from what *you* are to what *He* is. Have you a legion of devils in you? He is the devils' Master and can turn them all out at once! Does Satan, himself, seem to hold you in his grip? He who of old has fought the fiend and vanquished him will lead your captivity captive and take the prey from the mighty! If you must despair, despair yourself into Christ—I mean by that self-despair which is the next of kin to humble faith in Jesus—drop into His hands. Faint upon Christ's bosom and lie there in happy helplessness.

May the Lord disable you for anything else, and lead you to believe in His Anointed! God has sent you, Jesus! Will you not admit Him? He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. Come, then, at once, and believe in Him whom God has sent!

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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